

ROUTING

Top Secret 219

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Monday 21 August 1978

CG NIDC 78/195

NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION

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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Monday 21 August 1978

The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

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CHINA-VIETNAM: Negotiations

[] Chinese and Vietnamese negotiators appear to be moving toward an agreement to return to their homes in Vietnam the ethnic Chinese refugees who are stranded on the Vietnamese side of the border. Removal of the refugees would lower the risk of a military clash. The negotiators, however, remain far apart on other aspects of the dispute over Vietnam's overseas Chinese community.

[] During the third session of the vice-ministerial talks in Hanoi on Saturday, the Chinese delegate proposed that the Vietnamese send the Chinese nationals "back to their original places of residence and publicly guarantee their livelihood and employment."

[] The Vietnamese representative proposed that both sides issue a statement later the same day urging "those people who are unable to leave for China to return to their former places of residence to resume their normal life." Chinese delegate Chung Hsi-tung replied that he needed more time to examine the suggestion. No date for the next session of the talks was announced.

[] An important sticking point in resolving the problem is the Chinese demand for a guarantee of the refugees' "livelihood and employment," which the Vietnamese will probably reject as interference in their internal affairs.

[] The problem of stranded refugees arose when China on 12 July began to stem the unregulated flow of refugees across the border. Peking insisted the refugees cross only at designated border points and that they present repatriation certificates, issued by the Chinese Embassy in Hanoi, and Vietnamese exit visas.

[] Incidents have occurred between Vietnamese officials and the several thousand ethnic Chinese who apparently lack proper documentation and have been camped without facilities

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[REDACTED]

near the crossing points. China and Vietnam have accused each other of provoking the incidents. If the volatile refugee encampments can be closed as a result of the Hanoi talks, risk of these relatively small incidents leading to military clashes between the two states would be reduced.

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[REDACTED] The Chinese, in the talks on Saturday, made three additional proposals dealing with the ethnic Chinese that the Vietnamese negotiators dismissed out of hand. Included among these was the demand that Vietnam take back those "Vietnamese citizens who have been driven into China." Outside the framework of the negotiations, Peking and Hanoi media continue to attack each other in strident terms. [REDACTED]

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Iran

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[redacted] The Iranian Government is blaming Islamic fundamentalists opposed to the Shah's plans to modernize the country for the firebombing on Saturday of a crowded movie theater in Abadan. At least 377 people died. Ten or more theaters and restaurants have been bombed or burned since the beginning of Ramadan on 8 August. Muslim leaders have urged Iranians not to patronize theaters or restaurants in observance of the sacred month. [redacted]

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Palestinians

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[redacted] The perpetrators of the terrorist attack on an Israeli airline bus in London yesterday have not yet been identified, but the press reports that the radical Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, Special Operations, has claimed responsibility. [redacted]

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Turkey

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[redacted] Turkey has devalued the lira by up to 15.6 percent against European and other major currencies effective immediately but is keeping the rate against the US dollar unchanged at the 25 lira set on 1 March. This may be an important step toward meeting conditions for the next scheduled drawing under the International Monetary Fund standby credit agreement signed in April.

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[redacted] The devaluation is a move in the right direction but will not be enough by itself to solve Turkey's balance-of-payments difficulties. [redacted]

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